other during the same financial year for the last five years both under DRF and special railway safety fund; and

(c) what action his Ministry has taken on the CAG's report?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir. However, Ministry of Railways does not agree with the CAG's views. Track renewals are part of track maintenance activities which are carried out as and when track becomes due for renewal on age-cum-condition basis criteria. The sections sanctioned for gauge conversion do need maintenance works for safe operations of traffic. While there is no doubt that planning was on for gauge conversion, however, due to constraints in capacity and resources for executing works within the country, the time expected to be taken for completion of such projects was long and railway could not afford to endanger safety of traffic and traveling passengers. As a result, works in sections where gauge conversions were expected to have been done, track renewals were also required to be executed. Expenditure incurred, therefore, cannot be termed as wasteful. There is considerable improvement in track parameters, riding quality and overall safety, after completing track renewal works which were over due.

(b) Planning is made at the beginning of the financial year where budget allotment both for Depreciation Reserve Fund as well as under Special Railway Safety Fund are given to zonal railways (as a part of railway budget). Material planning is also done as per the targets given to railways. Execution of works needs many resources such as materials, manpower and machines which are arranged through different sources and contracts. Since there are many variables in their coordination therefore, there may be some shortfalls on some of the railways, however, overall targets on IR have mostly been achieved. Funds allotted are fully utilized. The budgetary control therefore, is adequate.

(c) CAG is being suitably apprised.

Non-payment of arrears by sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh

†*265. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh under public sector, cooperative sector and private sector owe an amount of rupees 13445.41 lakhs, 9313.77 lakhs and 26413.78 lakhs respectively for the price of sugarcane for the season 2006-07;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the sugar mills under private sector in Uttar Pradesh owe an amount of rupees 8455.02 lakhs for the price of sugarcane for the 2004-05 season and the seasons prior thereto;

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to expedite the payment to farmers; and

(d) by when the farmers would get the full payment?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) As per information received from the Government of Uttar Pradesh, the sector-wise cane price arrears for the sugar season 2006-07, as on 21st August, 2007, were as under:–

(Rs. in crore)

Sector	Cane price arrears as on 21.08.2007
Public Sector	233.05
Cooperative Sector	354.09
Private Sector	1506.36
TOTAL:	2093.50

(b) There are no cane price arrears in respect of sugar mills of Uttar Pradesh, for the sugar season 2004-05. However, for the sugar seasons prior to 2004-05, the cane price arrears to the tune of Rs. 84.55 crore were outstanding as on 31st July, 2007.

(c) The Central Government has recently reviewed the position of cane price arrears for 2004-05 and earlier sugar seasons and has advised the State Governments to initiate steps to recover the cane price arrears as arrears of land revenue except in case where judicial restraint orders are operative. The Government of Uttar Pradesh has reported that they are making efforts to liquidate the outstanding cane price arrears by issuing notices to the sugar mills concerned from time to time and interacting with them through regular hearing for expediting payment of the cane price dues. The State Government has also issued Recovery Certificates in respect of 8 sugar mills and District Magistrates have been asked to take strict action against the defaulting sugar mills. The Central Government on its part has taken the following steps to help the sugar industry to clear the cane price arrears of sugarcane growers:–

(i) A buffer stock of 20 lac tons has already been created for a period of one year from 01.05.2007 to 30.04.2008. An additional buffer stock of 30 lac tons has also been created for a period of one year from 1.8.2007 to 31.7.2008. Creation of 50 lac tons of buffer stock would involve a subsidy amount of Rs. 945 crore (approximately) to be borne from Sugar Development Fund. The banks would also provide additional credit of Rs. 1050 crore (approximately) on creation of buffer stock. The buffer subsidy amount and the additional credit are to be exclusively used for liquidation of cane price arrears of sugarcane farmers;

(ii) Export assistance to defray a part of expenditure on internal transport, marketing and handling charges and ocean freight @ Rs. 1350/- per tonne for sugar factories located in coastal areas and Rs. 1450/- per tonne for sugar factories located in non-coastal areas (subject to actuals for export by road/rail to neghbouring countries) have been announced for a period of one year with effect from 19th April, 2007.

The amount involved is Rs. 205 crore (approximately) which is to be borne from Sugar Development Fund. The export assistance is also to be used exclusively for cane price arrears payment.

(iii) Ban on export of sugar has been removed in January, 2007 and requirement of obtaining an export release order for export of sugar except for exports to EU countries and USA has been withdrawn *w.e.f.* 31.07.2007, for the current and next sugar season.

(d) The open market prices of non levy sugar have declined considerably in the current sugar season due to excess production of sugar which has constrained the capacity of the sugar mills to pay cane price dues to sugarcane growers in time. The sugarcane and sugar production in the next sugar season 2007-08 is also likely to be higher and sugar prices may continue to remain at present levels. It is difficult to indicate a definite time-frame by which the sugarcane growers would get their dues cleared.

Banned drugs in circulation

*266. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:
SHRI VINAY KATIYAR:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of drugs which are banned globally, are being sold in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether some drugs which are banned in the country, are still available in the market; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) to (d) There is no system of banning drugs globally by any organization or regulation. The safety and efficacy of a drug is ascertained as per Schedule Y of Drugs and Cosmetics Rules before market approval in the country. Even after market approval is given for any drug, the safety and efficacy is continuously examined on the basis of information received through Pharmocovigilance, Post-Marketing Surveillance and information reported from other countries.

In order to examine such information, the Drug Technical Advisory Board under Drugs and Cosmetics Act has constituted a Sub-committee, consisting of experts on the subject who examine the information received from the sources mentioned above and take a final view as to whether to prohibit the manufacture, sale and distribution of drugs or restrict its use for specific population and accordingly recommend to the Government to make suitable amendment in the market authorization or prohibit manufacture, sale and distribution and drugs under Section 26A of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act which empowers the Central Government to prohibit the manufacture, sale or distribution of such drug or cosmetics.